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Turner Mayor.

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Jovis 25° *die* Februarii 1668. *Annoque Regni* CAROLI *Secundi* Angl. &c. *Viceſimo primo.*

THis Day Sir *Samuel Starling*, and Sir *Joſeph Sheldon* Knights and Aldermen, formerly appointed to conſider the Petition of divers poor Women, in, and about this City, (eſpecially of the Pariſhes of St. *Botolph's Biſhops-gate*, and *Aldgate*) ſelling of *Fiſh*, for Liberty to continue their Imployments, free from Trouble and Proſecution, *&c.* did deliver into this Court a Report in Writing under their Hands, how they find the ſame, and their Opinions; the Tenor whereof is as followeth, *viz.*

To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, *and Court of* Aldermen.

ACcording to an Order of this Honourable Court of the [illegible] of *December* laſt paſt; We whoſe Names are ſubſcribed Committees thereby appointed to conſider of the Matters contained in the Petition of divers poor Women, in, and about this City, (eſpecially in the Pariſhes of St. *Botolph's Biſhops-gate* and *Aldgate*) Selling of *Fiſh*, for Liberty and Protection to continue their ſaid Imployment, and means of Livelihood, free from Diſturbance, and Actions at Law, which have lately been proſecuted againſt them, to their great Vexation and Impoveriſhment; Do humbly certifie, that having for our better Information called to our Aſſiſtance, our Deputies, and the Common Council-Men of the Wards of *Portſoaken*, and *Biſhops-gate*; And having had alſo before us ſome of the Company of *Fiſhmongers*, as alſo the *Fiſher-Men*, who ſerve the Markets of this City with *Fiſh*, and alſo the Petitioners; and having heard them touching the ſaid Petitioners Complaints; We do find, that the Proſecutions and Trouble occaſioned to the Petitioners, have been by the Direction and Order of the Trading *Fiſhmongers*, (as they themſelves confeſſed) upon the pretence of the Petitioners Ingroſſing, and unlawful obtaining into their Hands, the *Fiſh* brought for the uſe of this City, when in truth their real meaning thereby, is to weary out, and utterly to diſcourage the ſaid Petitioners from following their Imployments; that thereby they may wholly get the Trade into their own Hands, and Sell their Fiſh at unreaſonable and exceſſive Rates, and Priſes, to the abuſe of His Majeſties Subjects; For to Us it is made out, that the *Fiſhmongers* themſelves, as to the Ingroſſing of that Victual, and Foreſtalling of the Market; (not to excuſe the Petitioners, who are alſo groſs Offenders,) are as faulty, as the Petitioners, they, either by themſelves, or their Servants going in the Night time to *Billings-gate*, and ſometimes down the River, to Buy up the *Fiſh* there brought, or intended to be brought, not at all obſerving the Hours for opening and beginning the Market, ſo that by, and many times before theſe Hours, the *Fiſh* are wholly bought up by the *Fiſhmongers*; and the Petitioners, and many Citizens, who would otherwiſe ſupply themſelves at the firſt Hand, are herein diſappointed. That it doth appear to us, it hath been heretofore allowed to certain Women, being the Wives and Widows of Free-Men, and other Antient Dwellers within this City, and Liberties, to Buy up the middle and worſer ſort of *Fiſh*, ſuch as were left, and refuſed by the *Fiſhmongers*; provided the ſame were ſiſeable and wholſom, and to utter, and put to Sale the ſame again within this City, and Liberties, for the Benefit and Relief of the Poor; And (as the *Fiſhermen* do aver) unleſs ſome ſuch be continued, they cannot poſſibly utter the great quantities of *Fiſh* they bring to this City, but muſt be forced to throw away a great part thereof, to their great diſcouragement and loſs; the middle and worſer ſort of *Fiſh*, (although ſiſeable) being the greateſt part of what they bring to the Markets of this City. But we do alſo find that this Liberty of late years has been abuſed; for that a great number and ſort of diſorderly, and lewd Women, and Maids, fitter for more Painful and Laborious Service, appropriating to themſelves the Benefit of this Allowance; do take upon them to Sell, and carry *Fiſh* up and down the Streets, and Liberties of this City; and under that pretence, do practice many wicked and unlawful things; And many of the Petitioners themſelves do take upon them to keep Maid-Servants, and Apprentices to aſſiſt them in their Imployments, which they ought not to do.

NOW to Redreſs theſe, and many other Diſorders and Abuſes of the like nature, We humbly offer it as our Opinions:

I. That as to the Hours for beginning the Market at *Billings-gate*; the ſame from henceforth be from *Lady-Day* to *Michaelmas*, from Four of the Clock in the Morning; and from *Michaelmas*, to *Lady-Day*, from Five of the Clock in the Morning; and that before thoſe Hours, no perſon or perſons ſhall preſume to Buy or Sell any ſorts of *Fiſh* at the ſaid Market, excepting *Herrings*, *Sprats*, *Mayeril*, and *Shell-Fiſh*, upon pain to be proceeded againſt as Foreſtallers of the Markets; And that a Bell be hung up at *Billings-gate* as formerly, to be Rung at thoſe Hours, for direction of the People therein.

II. That for One Hour, to be accounted from the firſt opening of that Market, the Women which ſhall be Licenſed, Allowed, and Appointed to Sell, and Cry *Fiſh* within this City, ſhall not be permitted or allowed to Buy any of the *Fiſh* brought to the ſaid Market, except *Herrings*, *Sprats*, *Mayeril*, and *Shell-fiſh* in their ſeveral Seaſons; to the end that the *Fiſhmongers*, and ſuch Citizens, and other Inhabitants as will, may in that time ſupply themſelves with ſuch quantities as they ſhall have occaſion for; But that from, and after that Hour, (which ſhall be made known by the Ringing of the Market-Bell a ſecond time,) It ſhall be lawful for the ſaid Women to Buy off what ſhall be left by the *Fiſhmongers*, (provided the ſame be wholſom and ſiſeable,) ſuch quantities [illegible] Council after-mentioned, is permitted and allowed unto them.

III. That an Act of Common-Council of the 6th of *March* One Thouſand Six Hundred and Eleven, in the Ninth Year of the Raign of Our Late Soveraign Lord King JAMES; PEMBERTON MAYOR, made for Regulation and Ordering of ſuch as ſhould be admitted to Sell and Cry *Fiſh*, and other Victuals within this City, be in all the Articles and Points thereof from and after the Firſt of *March* next, obſerved and put in Execution; Except

Firſt, That as to the Hours therein mentioned, for the beginning the ſaid Market; That the ſame be as before are appointed. And

Secondly, That whereas that Act Declares, that ſuch Women as ſhall be allowed to S[illegible], and Cry *Fiſh*, and other Victuals within this City, ſhall be admitted and appointed by the Alderman, Deputy, and Common Council-Men of every ſuch Ward wherein they are allowed; That now beſides ſuch admittance, They, if Free-Mens Widows, and the Husbands of ſuch as be Married, be alſo Licenſed by Three Juſtices of the Peace of this City, according to the Statute 5. *Edw.* 6. Cap. 14.

IV. That ſuch Women as ſhall be Licenſed, Admitted, and allowed, as aforeſaid; and do not cry *Fiſh* up and down the Streets of this City; ſhall on the Market-days for *Fiſh*, Sit, and be placed in the Market-places, at the lower end of the Markets, with their Badges on, to diſtinguiſh them; that ſo at all times the *Fiſher-Men*, their Wives, and Servants, who bring *Fiſh* to ſerve the Markets of this City, may be placed, and have the preheminence of them in the ſaid Markets. And further, that on the ſaid Market-days for *Fiſh*, (viz.) *Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*; the ſaid Women ſhall not preſume to Stand, Abide, or Remain in any place or Street of this City, and Liberties, to Sell, Utter, and put to Sale, their *Fiſh*. But that on other days they ſhall be Allowed and Permitted to Stand, Remain, and Abide for Sale of their *Fiſh*, in ſuch places of the ſeveral Wards for which they are Allowed, as ſhall be aſſigned them by the Alderman, Deputy, and the Common-Council-Men of the ſaid Ward.

V. That at all times hereafter, the Perſons to be Admitted, Licenſed, and Appointed, as aforeſaid, ſhall Sell, Utter, and put to Sale no other than ſuch ſorts of *Fiſh*, as ſhall be wholſome and ſiſeable, upon pain that the party who ſhall be found to offend herein, ſhall not only Forfeit ſuch *Fiſh* ſo expoſed and offered to Sale; but ſhall have His or Her Badge taken away, and her Licenſe from thenceforth to be utterly void, and He or She for ever afterwards made uncapable of following ſuch Imployment, as was granted and permitted unto Him or Her by the ſaid Licence.

VI. That the perſons to be Admitted, Licenſed, and appointed, as aforeſaid, ſhall from time to time, and at all times hereafter, Sell, and offer to Sale their *Fiſh*, at reaſonable and moderate Rates and Prizes, and not by agreement among themſelves, or otherwiſe, preſume or offer to Enhance [illegible]s, or Sell at unjuſt and exceſſive Rates their ſaid *Fiſh*, upon pain to Forfeit ſuch *Fiſh*, and to undergo ſuch other Puniſhment as the nature of the offence ſhall deſerve.

VII. And laſtly, That all and every the Officers Enjoined and Required in, and by the ſaid Act of Common-Council, to ſee to the Obſervance and due Execution thereof; ſhall alſo take like care to ſee that all and every the particulars before-mentioned (which are not included in the ſaid Act,) be alſo duly obſerved, performed, and effectually executed.

All which nevertheleſs, We humbly ſubmit to the further conſideration of this Honourable Court. *This Fourth of* February, *One Thouſand Six Hundred Sixty and Eight.*

SAMUEL STARLING.

JOSEPH SHELDON.

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